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Refugee resettlement in Pennsylvania: Community support against all odds

by

Katelyn Barr

A Thesis

Presented to the Graduate and Research Committee

of Lehigh University

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

Sociology

Lehigh University

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KATELYN BARR

Thesis is accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in Sociology.

Refugee resettlement in Pennsylvania: Community support against all odds

Katelyn Barr

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## ABSTRACT

Recent United States policies under the Trump administration have severely restricted refugee resettlement efforts, despite an increased rate of displaced people worldwide. This study explores how refugee resettlement in Pennsylvania has changed in the wake of Trump-era policies and how resettlement agencies and communities have responded to policy changes. Literature indicates that refugees offer an overall benefit to communities, so a significant loss of refugees is expected to harm communities. A survey of Pennsylvania resettlement agencies and a content analysis of news articles in five key resettlement regions (Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Allentown/Scranton, Harrisburg/Lancaster, and Erie) finds that resettlement has seen challenges in the wake of policy changes. Resettlement agencies face layoffs and closure due to a low number of arrivals, refugees see longer wait times and family separation, and resettlement is failing to offset population loss in cities which have traditionally used refugees to boost their economies. However, despite a change in national rhetoric, security concerns, and residents' otherwise politically conservative views, Pennsylvania communities have all continued to show strong support for refugee resettlement efforts. This study recommends a set of standardized federal resettlement policies to protect resettlement agencies and communities from drastic fluctuations in policy as administrations change.

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND

#### *Global Displacement*

The world is currently facing one of the largest refugee crises in human history. In 2015, the crisis became the largest since World War II, displacing more than 12 million people (DePillis, 2015). Since 2015, the number of people displaced globally has continued to climb. 16.2 million people were newly displaced in 2017 alone, raising the global displacement count to nearly 65 million (UNHCR, 2018). These displaced people often flee their homelands, seeking new countries and communities. Many of them become refugees seeking resettlement worldwide.

#### *U.S. Policy*

Every year, the United States takes in a small number of these refugees to be resettled. The number of cases and the way refugee cases are processed is determined by the president's administration. The current administration, led by President Donald Trump, has instituted a number of restrictive policies which have limited refugee arrivals.

**Refugee Caps.** One of the most notable policy changes within the realm of refugee resettlement is the federal cap on refugee admissions. The number of refugees which are allowed into the U.S. is decided by a national ceiling on refugee admissions dictated by the president, and it varies widely by administration. At the creation of the refugee resettlement program in 1980, the U.S. federal cap was over 230,000 (U.S. Annual, 2018). While numbers have decreased since the program's inception, the U.S.

saw its lowest cap in history when the Trump administration lowered it from 85,000 to 45,000 in 2016. This cap remained in place through 2018, when the number of refugees actually admitted reached only 22,491 - less than half of the cap. In 2019, the cap was decreased further to 30,000, continuing patterns of admission restrictions (Wroughton, 2018). These refugee caps and resettlement numbers are historic lows for the U.S. In 2018, the U.S. resettled nearly 5,000 fewer refugees than in the year following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

**Travel Bans.** In addition to a sharp reduction in the number of refugees arriving from across the world, some countries have lost access to the U.S. refugee resettlement program entirely for periods of time. Often referred to as “travel bans,” executive actions from President Trump have sought to restrict access to the U.S. In January 2017, President Trump issued an executive order seeking to prevent individuals from seven countries - Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, and Libya - from entering U.S. borders for 90 days (Pierce, 2018). This action, called the “Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States” executive order, also sought to stop all refugee resettlement for 120 days. Blocked by federal courts, the executive order was rescinded and revised in March 2017 to exclude Iraq and lessen some other restrictions (Trump Travel Ban, 2018). A third version of the travel ban made its way to the Supreme Court in June 2018 and was upheld because it offered a waiver program to obtain visas from affected countries (Tsai, 2019). However, the State Department reported that 94% of waiver applications were denied in fiscal year 2018. Even with the addition of a waiver program, travel bans have posed significant barriers to refugees seeking admission to the United States.

**Other Restrictive Measures.** The decrease in the federal refugee cap and travel bans have been accompanied by other measures restricting refugee resettlement. Drastic federal funding cuts to refugee resettlement programs are an additional concern, as lack of funding causes problems in refugee processing (“U.S. Refugee,” 2017). In addition, new provisions for visa applications are slowing approvals. This includes social media checks, for example. In these ways, Trump administration policies are not only restricting access to the U.S. but are also slowing systems which can accept and place refugees.

### *Polarization of Rhetoric*

The policies outlined above have been both vigorously applauded and strongly contested throughout the nation. As refugee issues emerge as a hot topic of this administration, the national rhetoric surrounding these issues is increasingly polarizing. After Trump’s most recent travel ban was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2018, the growing national divide on refugee issues was particularly evident. A statement from the Department of Homeland Security praised Trump’s restrictive measures:

“While we have the most generous immigration system in the world, it has repeatedly been exploited by terrorists and other malicious actors who seek to do us harm. President Trump’s executive actions take important steps to protect the American people by allowing for the proper review and establishment of standards to prevent terrorist or criminal infiltration by foreign nationals.” (Epatko, 2018)

On the other hand, Farhana Khera, executive director of Muslim Advocates in Oakland, California, criticized the policy:

“Not since key decisions on slavery, segregation in schools, and Japanese-American incarceration, have we seen a decision that so clearly fails to protect those most vulnerable to

government-led discrimination,’ said. She vowed to fight against the ban until the president’s ‘anti-Muslim agenda is overturned for good.’” (Epatko, 2018)

These starkly different perspectives are not unique in discussion surrounding refugees. According to news outlets, national discourse is not only more polarizing than it was in the 1990s, but the U.S. also sees stronger polarization than the U.K. and Australia (Kefford and Ratcliff, 2018; Thrall, 2016). Increasingly extreme policy changes by the Trump administration have coincided with this polarization of rhetoric.

## PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Federal policies which drastically restrict refugee resettlement are certain to impact not only the country as a whole but also states and local communities. This study focuses on how resettlement agencies and communities in the state of Pennsylvania are adapting to increasingly restrictive federal policies regarding refugees. In the midst of these policy changes, this study seeks to answer the following questions: How has refugee resettlement in the state of Pennsylvania changed in the wake of new Trump-era policies? Specifically, how have refugee resettlement agencies and the larger community responded to policy changes? In order to answer these questions, this study uses two methods: a survey of Pennsylvania resettlement agencies and a content analysis of news articles in five key resettlement regions. Findings are understood using the theoretical frameworks of Social Identity Theory and Elite Theory.

Research about the impact of changing resettlement policies is vital to the state of Pennsylvania, as the eighth largest state for resettlement in the U.S (Cepla, 2019). At the same time, this research is pertinent to many other communities, which may be experiencing the same effects. As the cap on refugee admissions continues to decline and

more barriers to resettlement emerge, these impacts only become more salient in Pennsylvania communities. Research is needed to understand how local resettlement agencies and their surrounding communities are affected by these national policies and how Pennsylvania communities - many of which are politically conservative but traditionally see high levels of resettlement- are responding to changes. The timing could not be more relevant to explore these questions as the country faces historically low refugee caps and resettlement numbers.

This paper provides an outline of existing literature, an explanation of methods used in this study, an analysis of results, and a discussion of findings. This study recommends federal policy approaches to address current issues in refugee resettlement in Pennsylvania.

## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of existing literature relating to the research questions: How has refugee resettlement in the state of Pennsylvania changed in the wake of new Trump-era policies? Specifically, how have refugee resettlement agencies and the larger community responded to policy changes? This chapter will address definitions of the term “refugee,” known impacts of refugees on communities, previous research involving resettlement agencies, and theoretical frameworks to be utilized throughout this study.

## DEFINING “REFUGEE”

Colloquially, the word “refugee” can have many meanings. The term “refugee” is a political construction which is defined differently by nations across the world.

However, a standard international definition of the term “refugee” has been defined by the United Nations in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, also known as the Geneva Convention, and the subsequent 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (UN, 1951; UN, 1967). The U.N.UN definition refers to a refugee as someone who:

“...owing to wellfounded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.”

(UN, 1967, p.14)

The definition’s utility has been questioned by some scholars, who point out that it fails to encompass all parties in need of refuge. Doyle argues that because the U.N. definition of refugee “unjustly focuses on an overtly ‘male’ conception of ‘refugee’”, victims of gender-based violence have traditionally been left out (Doyle, 2009). Scholars also point to a lack of coverage for the growing number of individuals forced to migrate due to effects of climate change (Berchin, 2017; Fornale 2017).

Not all nations have signed onto the Geneva Convention or subsequent protocols, causing the definition to vary between nations. Even nations which have agreed to these terms may utilize slightly different terms or add other stipulations to their definition of “refugee.” In Africa, the definition of the term “refugee” has been notably expanded by

the 1969 Organization of African Unity Refugee Convention to encompass traditionally excluded groups (“Organization of African Unity,” 1969). However, even this expanded definition has faced criticism for its lack of practical application within African nations (Tuepker, 2002; Wood, 2014).

The United States has adopted the U.N. definition of refugee without additional stipulations (“Refugee Admissions”). Because this is the legal definition of refugee within the state of Pennsylvania, this study utilizes the U.N. definition of refugee to explore refugee resettlement in Pennsylvania. However, it should be noted that this definition has faced considerable criticism, and in other contexts, the meaning of this term may vary.

## REFUGEES’ IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES

### *Double Impact*

When exploring changes in refugee resettlement within Pennsylvania and the response of resettlement agencies and communities, it is important to understand how refugees generally impact communities. Existing literature has already explored the impact of refugees on their local communities. In a number of studies, refugees have been found to have a double impact on communities, meaning that there are both costs and benefits for countries hosting refugee populations (Black, 1994; Cooper, 2016; Jacobsen, 2002; Zetter, 2012). This is important to this study because a change in the number of refugees in a community might offer advantages and disadvantages in several areas.



Host countries and communities bear a number of costs for refugee resettlement. First, an obvious impact on public budgets and social welfare programs exists (Zetter 2012). Refugees entering communities pose a clear initial cost for host communities, which might include offering refugees lump sums of money, access to food stamp programs, free healthcare, and more upon arrival. This is one of the most measurable impacts of refugee populations within their communities and is often a concern for citizens within host countries.

Refugees may also pose questions about security (Jacobsen 2002). Citizens and governments voice concern about the safety of allowing refugees, who often emigrate from conflict-ridden areas, into their country. This is currently the case within the United States, where a rhetoric of fear regarding refugee populations is prevalent. While this usually does not prevent the resettlement of refugees altogether, it may lead to a decrease in arrivals (such as the lowering of the U.S. refugee ceiling), more stringent security protocols and background checks, and fear within the host country's local population. However, literature reveals that rhetoric surrounding security concerns often outpaces reality, as refugees are not shown to increase crime rates (Mohn, 2016).

Refugees have also been linked to environmental degradation (Zetter, 2012). The addition of refugees into the population often adds an environmental burden through increased consumption. This is especially true in countries receiving large numbers of refugees in proportion to their population and when refugees live in places not typically inhabited by the local community. Temporary settlements and refugee camps also place a special burden on the environment and therefore local governments.

Politics are yet another hurdle to the resettlement of refugee populations. At times, countries that resettle refugees run the risk of complicating their global relationships (Zetter, 2012). Relationships with the country from which the refugees arrive, as well as their allies, may present diplomatic complications depending on the politics of the host country. The choice to admit refugees is one that may come with political repercussions.

Finally, existing literature shows an economic impact on host countries. This impact is shown as both positive and negative. Several studies point to economic costs on host countries' economies when refugees first arrive (Evans, 2017; Li, 2003; Zetter, 2012). This is related to the costs of social welfare programs addressed above and distortion of markets, which negatively influence economies. However, as refugees integrate more deeply into communities over a longer period of time, an economic benefit has also been found in many cases.

In the communities they enter, refugees provide economic benefit in the form of human capital (Evans, 2017; Jacobsen, 2002; Li, 2003; Zetter, 2012). As they acclimate to communities, they join the workforce, consume goods locally, start businesses, and factor into local economies. This can be extremely beneficial for communities, especially in areas which are declining in population or seeing an aging workforce. In these cases and others, refugees can revitalize and strengthen the economies of host communities they join.

Another beneficial impact of refugee resettlement is the collection of international assistance by the host community. Studies refer to international aid as both a mediator to the costs of resettlement and a general community benefit (Jacobsen, 2002; Li, 2003).

While assistance benefits refugees directly, it can also serve the larger community. As resources (including food, money, and health-related resources) are offered to the refugee population, they also circulate within the community. One study in particular finds a nutritional benefit for communities surrounding refugee camps (Gengo, 2018). Because the camps received food and economic resources, the local community benefitted. As trade networks were established, goods began to flow between the camps and communities, and the surrounding community was found to have better nutrition than before refugees arrived.

Refugees have also been found to engage meaningfully with their communities. A study of the civic engagement patterns of refugees and immigrants found that both refugees and immigrants gave back to their local communities (Weng, 2016). Their techniques for civic engagement included: direct assistance to family and friends, connecting others to local forms of assistance, making charitable donations, fundraising for larger causes (like natural disasters or family deaths), and volunteering. The study also notes that these populations often run or maintain nonprofit organizations, which offer significant benefit to their host community.

In addition, refugees change the fabric of the communities in which they live. Studies list the benefit of increased diversity within communities (Jacobsen, 2017; Weng, 2016). This includes ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Studies explore the ways in which refugees contribute to their communities' culture through sport, religion, education, music, and community activities (Lewis, 2010; Morland and Levine, 2016; Sierk, 2017; Spaaj, 2012).

Finally, there is a clear humanitarian benefit for communities accepting refugee populations (Li, 2003). Today, this benefit is clear amidst our global refugee crisis. Communities take part in global relief efforts by providing homes to those affected by conflict, natural disasters, persecution, and more. Providing refuge helps house the growing number of displaced people across the globe. In addition, by allowing a greater number of refugees into a community, refugees see an increased chance for family reunification.

### *Community Benefit*

A number of studies discuss the double impact of refugee resettlement. Studies occur in Europe, Canada, Africa, and the U.S. in particular. Some intend to measure costs and benefits against one another in order to determine whether host countries feel more of a burden or reward for resettlement. A consensus among several studies finds that the potential benefits of hosting refugees outweigh potential risks (Gengo, 2018; Jacobsen, 2002; Li, 2003; Weng, 2016). This is especially notable for this study because it implies that the loss of refugee populations (especially in areas which have typically received large numbers of refugees, like Pennsylvania) may negatively impact communities. Because this study aims to look particularly at the changes in refugee resettlement in a time when arrival numbers are at historic lows, findings are expected to reflect community harm from a loss of these refugee populations.

## RESETTLEMENT AGENCIES

Because this study explores how refugee resettlement has changed in the wake of Trump-era policies, targeting the response of refugee resettlement agencies is vital. Not only are resettlement agencies at the center of policy and community response, but they are also rarely studied. In the literature, resettlement agencies have been noted for their role in communities. Social workers within resettlement agencies often act as cultural brokers between refugees and the local community (Shandy, 2006). Additionally, they support refugees psychologically, as they deal with trauma on top of their regular casework duties, which serves to integrate refugees into their communities. However, few studies report how refugee resettlement agencies are impacted in times of change. One study finds that agencies face difficulties finding jobs for refugees in times of economic hardships, but other studies fail to address resettlement agencies at all (Teixeira-Poit, 2010). There is a large gap to be filled in the story of how the agencies serving refugees, which are made up of community members, are impacted by restrictionist national policies. This study intends to look at resettlement agencies in particular while exploring the impact of Trump-era policies, as these agencies find themselves on the front lines of policy changes and resettlement work.

## THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

In order to understand the findings of this study, two theoretical foundations are used to analyze results within sociological paradigms. Specifically, findings related to Social Identity Theory and Elite Theory are of interest during this study, which addresses the questions: How has refugee resettlement in the state of Pennsylvania changed in the

wake of new Trump-era policies? Specifically, how have refugee resettlement agencies and the larger community responded to policy changes?

The content of this study relates strongly to Social Identity Theory, pioneered by Tajfel and Turner (1979). This group comparison theory argues that a person's understanding of who they are comes from the group(s) they are a part of, or their ingroups. By categorizing ourselves into ingroups, identifying with these groups, and comparing our group to others (outgroups), an "us" vs. "them" mentality is fostered. This theory has been utilized to discuss the influence of ethnocentrism on American political views (Kinder and Kam 2010). In particular, it has been coopted as a lens to view the effect of stereotyping on attitudes toward immigration.

Similarly, this theory can be used to describe attitudes toward refugee populations. Because of their differing cultural background and place of origin, refugees are likely to be seen as an "outgroup" in their new communities. This may cause tension with local community members, who may demonize or fear refugees because of their inability to identify with them. It may also lead to a general lack of support for refugees within communities. In the context of this study, Social Identity Theory is useful in explaining why community members might respond positively to restrictive resettlement policies, despite literature affirming that refugees provide an overall community benefit.

On the other hand, Elite Theory provides an explanation for why communities may see strong support of refugee resettlement in the midst of restrictive policies. If empirical knowledge shows that refugees benefit communities and refugees receive strong local support, policies are not reflecting the preference or needs of the people they seek to serve. One possible explanation for this discrepancy is Elite Theory.

In his book *The Power Elite*, C. Wright Mills argues that a “power elite” is created through three institutions: the government, the military, and the business community (Mills, 1956). This power elite shapes the world around us, always working to reinforce their own interests. In this context, President Trump can be viewed as a part of this power elite, given his central role in government, military, and business. If federal policies created by Trump and his administration do not serve the needs of community members, Mills might argue that Trump’s policies serve himself and other power elite. In this case, restrictionist policies may not follow community wants and needs, but they may contribute to a larger nationalist rhetoric which serves to disempower immigrants in U.S. society.

A key tenet of Elite Theory is the disempowerment of other social groups by the power elite in order to maintain their own status. In this case, the disempowerment of immigrants and refugees therefore reinforces the power of those who have traditionally held power within societies: the power elite. This means that a strong community response in support of refugees would support assertions of Elite Theory.

Both Elite Theory and Social Identity Theory are helpful in providing explanations for the results of this study. While a number of other sociological paradigms could certainly be used to discuss this topic, these particular theories will be used to describe results.

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

### SUMMARY

This study utilizes both a survey of Pennsylvania resettlement agencies and a qualitative content analysis of news articles to answer the questions: How has refugee resettlement in the state of Pennsylvania changed in the wake of new Trump-era policies? Specifically, how have refugee resettlement agencies and the larger community responded to policy changes?

Because the survey component of this study did not yield data for analysis, content analysis was employed as a secondary method to answer the research questions above. The procedures for both the survey and content analysis are outlined below.

### SURVEY

The Pennsylvania Survey of Refugee Resettlement (PSRR) is a cross-sectional study of refugee resettlement organizations designed to answer the question: How has refugee resettlement in the state of Pennsylvania changed in the wake of new Trump-era policies? Specifically, how have refugee resettlement agencies and the larger community responded to policy changes?

#### *Operationalization of Concepts*

In this study, “refugee resettlement” refers to the initial placement of refugees into the United States. “Refugee” refers to someone who falls under the U.S. legal definition of the term, as discussed in the literature review. Refugee resettlement specifically within the state of Pennsylvania is the focus of this study. “Trump-era

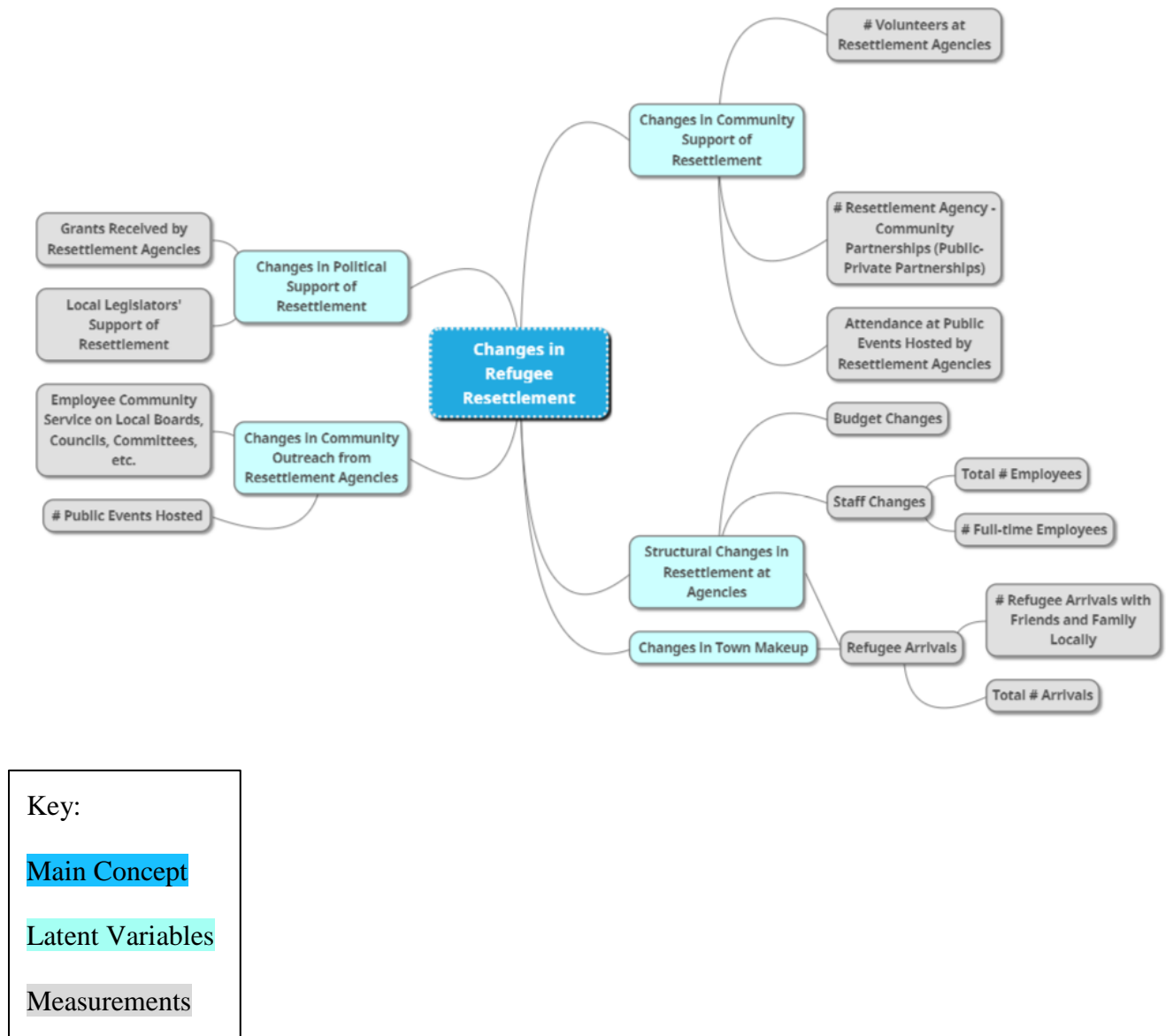


policies” refer to federal policy changes relating to refugee resettlement enacted by the Trump administration, including caps on refugee resettlement, travel bans, and visa changes discussed within the background section of this study.

The changes in refugee resettlement within Pennsylvania in the wake of new Trump-era policies are the main concepts explored in this survey. Specifically, the way resettlement agencies and their larger communities have responded to policy changes is of interest. The full list of survey questions provided to organizations can be found in Appendix A. The factors, or latent variables, which will measure this impact include: structural changes in resettlement at agencies, changes in community support of resettlement, changes in political support of resettlement, changes in community outreach from resettlement agencies, and changes in town makeup due to resettlement. These latent variables were identified by first observing resettlement changes in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and are utilized in this study to test whether similar trends are occurring statewide.

As multi-dimensional concepts, each of these latent variables is broken down into several measurements as described below. Changes in each latent variable will be recorded between fiscal year 2016 and 2018 (FY 16-18). These years are measured because they represent the year before Trump was inaugurated, the year Trump was inaugurated, and the year after Trump was inaugurated. To ensure comparability between the years, 2019 is not included, as FY 19 is not yet complete. Figure 1 on the following page displays latent variables and their respective measurements.

**Figure 1. Latent Variables and Measurements for Survey Design**



Structural changes in resettlement at agencies refers to changes related to refugee resettlement occurring within refugee resettlement agencies. Structural changes are measured by the organizational budget, total number of employees, number of full-time employees, total number of refugee arrivals, and number of refugee arrivals with friends or family residing locally between FY 16-18. These changes are expected to occur due to recent federal policy changes made by the Trump administration which pose additional

restrictions on refugee resettlement. As described in the literature review, refugee resettlement agencies have been shown to experience difficulties in times of economic change; however, the literature does not illuminate organizational difficulties in times of political change, which this variable seeks to measure.

Changes in community support of resettlement refers to efforts by residents of the local community to support incoming refugee populations and resettlement agencies. Community support of resettlement is measured through the number of volunteers at resettlement agencies, number of partnerships between resettlement agencies and other local organizations and businesses (also called public-private partnerships), and community attendance at public events hosted by resettlement agencies between FY 16-18. Changes in community support are of particular interest given the growing polarization of rhetoric surrounding refugees, as described in the background section of this study.

Similarly, changes in political support of resettlement are of interest given this polarization, which is apparent not just among U.S. residents but among politicians as well. Political support of resettlement is measured by local legislators' level of support for resettlement and the amount of money resettlement agencies received through grants. The change in political support is seen through a comparison of these measurements for FY 16-18.

Changes in community outreach from resettlement agencies refers to ways in which resettlement agencies' interactions with the surrounding community have changed. Here, it is measured by the change in number of public events hosted and resettlement agency employees' service on local boards, councils, and committees between FY 16-18.

This variable is included to show whether federal policy changes relating to refugees have influenced the way in which organizations are able to support and interact with their local community.

Changes in town makeup due to refugee resettlement refers to changes in the demographics of a town due to a change in refugee arrivals. This variable is measured through the total number of refugee arrivals and the number of arrivals with family and friends residing locally between FY 16-18. The number with family and friends residing locally is included because it reflects how many arrivals are already connected with the local community and how many do not have an existing connection to the local community upon arrival. This changes the makeup of the community and provides insight into how many families are reunited through the process of refugee resettlement. This variable is included because it helps to illuminate both positive and negative impacts of refugee resettlement, as the literature states that increased resettlement poses a double impact, including increased family reunifications, an increase in human capital, changes in the cultural landscape, a strain on public programs, and security concerns. Therefore, the measurement of the changing numbers of refugee arrivals is of interest to this study.

### *Sampling Procedure*

PSSR's target population is all Pennsylvania resettlement agencies, and this study sought to survey the entire target population. An initial list of 14 Pennsylvania resettlement agencies was acquired through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement website and used to contact organizations ("Find Resources", 2019). A major limitation of this approach is that resettlement

agencies which may have closed due to the decrease in refugee arrivals have not been surveyed. Additionally, organizations listed on the U.S. Administration for Children and Families website may be out of date, which allows for potential ineligible units if closed organizations are listed or organizations are listed under a different name. Although the webpage states that it was last reviewed April 30, 2019, the method for review is not listed, and information may have changed since the review date. In order to reduce sampling error, the list of agencies was updated as agencies were contacted to reflect any known closures or changes in service providers. Table 1 below shows the final number of organizations for which contact was attempted and the status of this contact.

**Table 1. Methods for Agency Contact and Results of Contact**

This table shows the status of contact with refugee resettlement agencies. The term “Survey Participant Identified” indicates that contact with the organization was established, and the organization provided the name and contact of an individual who would be able to complete the survey. “Agreed to Complete Survey” indicates that the identified survey participant directly agreed, via phone or email, to complete the survey. Blocks have also been color-coded to indicate expected response level:

Expected Response

Unknown

Expected Non-Response

Resettlement Agency Number	Method of Contact	Result of Contact
1	2 Emails	Survey Participant Identified
2	2 Phone Calls, 3 Emails	Survey Participant Identified

3	2 Phone Calls, 3 Emails	Survey Participant Identified
4	2 Phone Calls, 3 Emails	Survey Participant Identified
5	2 Phone Calls, 3 Emails	Survey Participant Identified
6	1 Phone Call, 1 Email	Survey Participant Identified
7	No Contact	Closed
8	5 Phone Calls, No Email Available	No Answer, Presumed Closed
9	2 Phone Calls, 3 Emails	Survey Participant Identified, Agreed to Complete Survey
10	No Contact	Closed
11	No Contact	Closed
12	2 Phone Calls, 3 Emails	Survey Participant Identified, Agreed to Complete Survey
13	2 Phone Calls, 3 Emails	Survey Participant Identified

14	1 Email	No Longer Offering Resettlement Services
15	2 Phone Calls, 3 Emails	Survey Participant Identified, Agreed to Complete Survey
16	1 Phone Call	No Longer Offering Resettlement Services
17	3 Emails, No Phone Number Available	No Response, Possibly Closed

All Pennsylvania resettlement organizations were contacted via phone, or via email when a phone number was not available, to determine who within the organization possessed thorough knowledge of resettlement programming. The individual with the most knowledge of resettlement programs was then contacted via email with a brief explanation of the study and a link to the survey. This two-step process was intended not only to find the individual best suited to complete the survey, but also to notify organizations of the survey prior to its disbursement. The individuals identified to take the survey were also offered a \$25 Amazon gift card for their completion of the survey. Many of these individuals were the director of their organization's resettlement program or held a similar title. The options to take the survey both via email and over the phone were offered to reduce non-response rate. While an in-person survey would also have been quite effective, the combination of mail and email surveys is more cost-effective and does not require statewide travel.

Participants were asked to answer organizational-level questions only, and therefore the study is not considered human subjects research. While IRB clearance was not required for this study, Lehigh University’s Office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Research and Graduate Studies was contacted to discuss level of compensation and survey content.

### *Survey Response*

Survey response from resettlement organizations was unexpectedly low, given the success of organizational contact shown in Table 1. Table 2 below shows response status and reasons for nonresponse when applicable. The survey saw response from only three of ten organizations which were successfully contacted. Though this represents 33.33% of the target population, there is not enough data to represent conditions statewide. Of the two organizations which provided explanations for nonresponse, the reason was the same: lack of time. In addition to organizations which did not respond, 5 out of 17 organizations for which contact was attempted no longer offered resettlement services or had closed entirely. Another was presumed closed given the inability to contact the organization after several attempts, and one was marked “possibly closed” because no phone number was listed and no contact was received via email. These notes are listed in Table 1.

### **Table 2. Agency Response Rate**

Where reasons for non-response are listed, the participant provided a reason via email that they could not complete the survey. Blocks are color-coded to reflect response status:

Response  
No Response  
No Contact



<b>Resettlement Agency Number</b>	<b>Response Status</b>	<b>Reasons for Non- Response</b>
1	Survey Completed	
2	Survey Completed	
3	No Response	Lack of Time
4	No Response	
5	No Response	Lack of Time
6	Survey Completed	
7	No Contact	Closed
8	No Contact	Presumed Closed
9	No Response	
10	No Contact	Closed
11	No Contact	Closed
12	No Response	
13	No Response	
14	No Contact	No Longer Offering Resettlement Services
15	No Response	
16	No Contact	No Longer Offering Resettlement Services
17	No Contact	Possibly Closed

Due to a low response rate and the decreased target population size, PSRR survey data was not able to be analyzed as a part of this study. However, low response rate among organizations, reasons for nonresponse, number of agency closures, and the minimal amount of data gathered support a common story: resettlement organizations in Pennsylvania are struggling. In order to further explore this story and other ways in which refugee resettlement has been impacted in the wake of new Trump-era policies, a content analysis was conducted.

## CONTENT ANALYSIS

In addition to the distribution of the survey above, a qualitative content analysis of news articles was performed addressing the research questions: How has refugee resettlement in the state of Pennsylvania changed in the wake of new Trump-era policies? Specifically, how have refugee resettlement agencies and the larger community responded to policy changes? This content analysis adapts Mayring's methods for inductive category development to explore the above questions (Mayring, 2000). Stages of coding included the identification of research questions, determination of category definitions, initial formulation of inductive categories, revision of categories, final coding, and analysis. These methods are discussed in detail below.

The content analysis uses news articles from the database Nexis Uni to understand how resettlement has changed between the start of today's refugee crisis in 2015 and now. Based on Pennsylvania arrival statistics found on the Pennsylvania Refugee Resettlement Program's website, five resettlement regions were identified within the state of Pennsylvania: Pittsburgh, Harrisburg/Lancaster, Philadelphia, Scranton/Allentown,

and Erie (“Demographics and Arrival Statistics”). A total of 196 news articles were found for these regions, sorted by date, coded, and thematically analyzed. One major limitation of this approach is that it describes only themes apparent through news articles. Other opinions may be held by residents, and news coverage has the potential to be biased based on the values of the news agency and personal viewpoints of the writer. However, this analysis is still valuable in identifying major trends in local news articles and providing insight into refugee resettlement changes within communities.

In order to find pertinent news articles for each region, the name of each city within the region was searched within the Nexis Uni database along with the phrase “PA refugee resettlement.” When a region contained more than one major city, such as Harrisburg/Lancaster and Scranton/Allentown, each city was searched separately. The results of this search were limited to the timeframe January 1, 2015 through July 1, 2019. This timeframe is slightly adjusted from the 2016-2018 timeframe of the survey because the content analysis intends to measure changes in community rhetoric surrounding resettlement. The inclusion of 2015 articles allows for the comparison of rhetoric at the start of the current refugee crisis with today’s rhetoric. Additionally, this time captures the period in which Trump’s voice became prominent on the political stage before he was elected president.

In addition, the search for articles limited the location to Pennsylvania. This analysis explores only content created *within* Pennsylvania rather than all content *about* Pennsylvania, in order to more accurately capture information about opinions of those living within the state of Pennsylvania. Articles were also sorted based on their relevance to the topic of refugee resettlement. Articles in which refugee resettlement was not a

major theme and duplicate articles were removed. In addition, articles discussing “migrants” generally were not a part of this analysis, including articles discussing recent family separation policies.

In the search for articles within a few cities, local newspaper articles did not appear within the Nexis Uni database. In order to provide coverage of these areas, the same search was conducted on local news websites for these cities. In each city, the website of the largest local newspaper by circulation was searched with the term “refugee resettlement” and the same parameters as listed above. Additional news sites which were utilized include *The Morning Call*, *The Erie-Times-News*, and *The Scranton Times-Tribune* for Allentown, Erie, and Scranton, respectively. This allowed for articles regarding refugee resettlement from every region to be a part of the analysis.

### *Coding and Analysis*

Articles compiled using the procedure above were then organized by date, coded, and analyzed thematically. The creation of a codebook adapted Mayring’s procedures for inductive category development (Mayring, 2000). The coding began with a first read of all articles, during which notes regarding major themes were taken. Based on this first read, literature review content, and the results of the original survey, a codebook was created. Each article was then re-coded into two categories: major themes and actors discussed within the article. The full codebook is listed in Appendix B.

After being coded, articles were arranged regionally and chronologically. Thematic analysis not only explored trends across the state of Pennsylvania over time, but also compared dynamics between various regions within Pennsylvania. This provides

both an interregional and intraregional lens to understand the changes in refugee resettlement across Pennsylvania between 2015 and 2019.

## CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

### SURVEY

While the survey did not provide any information that could be used for in-depth analysis, it is still important to note other findings throughout the process. First, 5 out of 17 resettlement agencies for which contact was attempted were either closed or presumed closed. Given that one organization provided information that they had closed due to lack of arrivals, and the few organizational survey responses showed a sharp decrease in staff, it is likely that the closures occurred due to Trump-era policy changes. Additionally, organizations which provided a reason for nonresponse listed lack of time. This likely relates to a decrease in organizational staff as well.

Though inferential statistics were not able to be used given the small amount of data, the three survey responses obtained are useful descriptively. Responses which were obtained for all three participating organizations are shown in Table 3 below. First, the decrease in the number of refugees to these organizations reflected the national decrease in refugee arrival numbers. Between the three responding organizations, 457 refugees were resettled throughout fiscal year 2016. In fiscal year 2018, this number dropped to 136 refugees resettled.

**Table 3. Survey Responses**

This table shows survey responses from the three participating organizations.

<b>Resettlement Agency Number</b>	<b>Number of Refugee Arrivals</b>			<b>Number of Employees</b>			<b>Number of Full- Time Employees</b>		
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
1	104	42	14	7	5	3	5	4	2
2	321	163	69	8	7	2	7	5	1
6	32	74	53	3	7	4	2	6	3

Additionally, all organizations showed a decrease in staff from 2016 to 2018, with a total of 18 employees from these organizations in 2016 shrinking to only 9 employees in 2018. Similarly, the number of full-time employees dropped from 14 in 2016 to only 6 in 2018. These numbers point toward a struggle among resettlement agencies to keep their employees in the midst of decreased arrival numbers.

Despite the small amount of data obtained from this survey, the inability of organizations to complete the survey along with closures and employment changes makes a strong case that resettlement agencies have been greatly affected by Trump-era policies. It is likely that due to a sharp decrease in refugee arrivals, these organizations are struggling to survive in the current political climate.

## CONTENT ANALYSIS

Results of the content analysis are described in depth below. A statewide analysis was completed, as well as regional analyses for each of the five resettlement regions (Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Allentown/Scranton, Harrisburg/Lancaster, and Erie). General

trends include strong support for refugee resettlement both before and after the enactment of restrictive policies, ample discussion of negative policy effects, and unique regional stories surrounding refugee support.

### *Statewide Results*

In the content analysis portion of this study, 196 articles were analyzed thematically. A number of patterns emerged across the state, including a steady discussion surrounding resettlement from January 2015 to July 2019, steady support for refugee resettlement regardless of time, and largely negative effects stemming from recent Trump-era policies.

**Volume of Articles.** The conversation surrounding refugee resettlement within this content analysis remained reasonably steady from January 2015 to July 2019. In order to determine whether the inauguration of Trump and enactment of his policies coincided with an increased discussion of refugee resettlement, a monthly article rate was calculated for the months leading up to January 2017 and those after it. Before January 2017, the month of Trump's inauguration, an average of 3.63 articles per month were written regarding refugee resettlement in the five resettlement regions studied. From January 2017 through July 2019, an average of 3.51 articles per month were written on the subject. The difference in the number of articles per month written about refugee resettlement before and after Trump's inauguration was negligible. Therefore, Trump-era policies did not coincide with any rise in media coverage regarding refugee resettlement.

**Consistent Support.** Another apparent statewide trend was consistent support for refugee resettlement. Out of 196 articles analyzed, 116 discussed ways in which

refugees or resettlement efforts were supported. Types of support included general support or advocacy; programming; art, culture, and food activities; grants; charity, fundraising, or donations; local partnerships; and sharing refugee stories. This support was offered from a number of sources, including: the community at large, religious groups, schools and students, resettlement agencies and other local nonprofits, politicians, individual citizens, and refugees themselves. Support was apparent leading up to Trump's 2017 inauguration and continued after his inauguration, with 57 articles prior to 2017 and 59 following. Overall, displays of support for refugee resettlement in the media have remained high in the wake of restrictive Trump-era policies.

**Negative Effects.** However, some effects of these Trump-era resettlement policies are clear through analysis. 35 of 109 articles analyzed after Trump's inauguration discuss negative effects stemming from his policies, and several notable patterns emerged across the state. Four articles describe religious groups' concern about the morality of policies, which seek to further limit the intake of refugees. A Catholic bishop from Erie comments, "Now is the time to defend the rights of all God's people" ("Erie Catholic," 2017). Additionally, three articles describe non-religious community members who feel that policies go against American values, explaining that these policies are "changing who we are as a country" (Gammage, 2018). The idea that policies violate moral values appears a total of seven times in the statewide analysis.

Another criticism of Trump-era policies in this analysis was that they caused extreme delays in arrivals and elongated family separations. Four articles describe the stories of those who are delayed from arriving or meeting with family members due to



travel bans. One article describes a woman named Nasro, a new arrival who is waiting for her family to join her:

“She arrived in the U.S. alone just a few weeks ago and was waiting for 11 of her family members to join her. They had, she said, been cleared to come this month... Now, she said, the order has separated her from her family, and she doesn’t know for how long. Multiple clearances are required, and any that expire during the delay would have to be obtained again – a process that can take months to years.” (Stauffer, 2017)

In addition to the impacts that policies have had on refugee populations, many refugee resettlement agencies are struggling. Seven articles describe agency issues stemming from Trump-era policy. These include layoffs at agencies, fear of closing, consolidation, and the closure of related programs to assist resettled refugees. In Lancaster, one article describes nine local resettlement-related layoffs by agencies due to low volume of refugee arrivals (Cornelius, 2018). Other articles echo similar struggles, with some wondering if agencies will remain open.

**Mixed and Positive Effects.** Some articles also discussed mixed effects of policies; however, the number was quite small in comparison to those discussing negative policy effects. In the 109 articles analyzed between January 2017 and July 2019, five discussed policies in a neutral way or as having a mix of positive and negative effects on the community. All five articles relate specifically to travel bans. One article describes the issue in a neutral stance, another praises the concept but criticizes the implementation, the third describes mixed stances among politicians, and the last two discuss disagreements between pro-ban politicians and anti-ban community members. No articles discuss solely positive effects from Trump-era policies.

**Other Topics.** A number of other topics appeared in the statewide analysis of data with fewer instances of discussion. They include education and health, with particular concern regarding the schooling of refugees after resettlement, and the mental health of refugees. Refugees' influence on the economy, their ability to find jobs, and the price of their housing were also discussed minimally.

### *Regional Results*

**Erie.** Several trends also appeared within particular regions of the state. Articles from the Erie region distinctly discuss a changing town makeup and economy as a result of refugee resettlement. Of the 37 articles examined from Erie, 12 discuss this issue. Specifically, these articles tell the story of a city declining in population and describe the resettlement of refugees as a way to mitigate this loss of residents. A 2015 article summarizes this issue: "As Erie's population continues to sink, the only significantly growing population in the city is coming in from the rest of the world" (Weiss, 2015). It goes on to quote Ed Grode, a local resident and board member for the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, saying, "Without refugees, the city's overall population would be drastically lower." Population concerns extend to the region's economy as well, which is impacted by population loss.

In articles after Trump's inauguration, implications of restrictive policies in this vein are discussed. The most recent article on the topic provides insight into the current situation. It explains: "Last week brought news... that Erie County's population dropped by more than 1,800 people between 2017 and 2018, according to new U.S. Census Bureau estimates. That loss was exacerbated by the Trump administration's restrictive

policies on resettling refugees” (Howard, 2019). Because the local region relies on refugee populations to mitigate population loss and fuel their economy, recent policies restricting resettlement have been noted as especially harmful to Erie within news media.

Given the need for refugee populations, the city of Erie has put forth a consistently welcoming stance toward refugee populations in the years after Trump’s inauguration. Seven articles describe local politicians’ support for refugee populations, with emphasis on mayoral support. Most recently, news media describes Mayor Joe Schember’s creation of a New American Council to support refugees because he believes that “greater tolerance and an increased understanding of other cultures will make Erie a better community” (Flowers, 2019). This welcoming stance, a strong need for refugees, and difficulties in the face of restrictionist policies are the strongest themes evident for the region of Erie.

**Harrisburg/Lancaster.** A different kind of story emerges for the Harrisburg and Lancaster region. This region saw the highest number of articles pertaining to refugee resettlement in general, and support for resettlement is strong from 2015 to 2019. Of the 65 articles analyzed for this region, 35 explicitly discuss support for refugee populations and resettlement efforts. However, this may seem unusual to some, given the political conservatism of the area, especially in Lancaster. One article summarizes the situation in Lancaster: “From the outside, Lancaster County might seem like a paradox: A religiously and politically conservative community that simultaneously welcomes refugees and embraces a candidate suspicious of refugees” (Shannon, 2017). A local resident echoes this thought, explaining: “‘I don’t know what ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal’ means

anymore.’... After hearing the stories of refugees... the right thing to do seemed clear” (Shannon, 2017).

This type of rhetoric is not new to the region, either. From the beginning of the analysis period in 2015, articles describe support of refugee populations in conservative religious communities. One article describes: “‘From a biblical perspective, we’re supposed to accept everyone,’ said Pastor Denise Hinson of Grace ministries in Lancaster.... The response is the same from Jewish temples and Muslim mosques” (Knapp, 2015). This region sees not only the highest number of articles discussing refugee resettlement, but also consistent support in a politically conservative area.

**Pittsburgh.** The Pittsburgh region also sees strong support of resettlement efforts despite some major roadblocks. Of 60 articles, Pittsburgh saw 43 which described support of refugee populations and resettlement efforts. However, this is the only region which experienced issues regarding terrorism, which was evident through analysis.

Before issues of terrorism within Pittsburgh arose, discussions regarding the possibility of attacks began. However, the articles written on this topic take a surprisingly pro-refugee approach, assuaging concerns of terrorism. A 2015 article explains:

“Islamic jihadists hell-bent on waging attacks on American soil are unlikely to hide among fleeing Syrians and wade through the besieged U.S. refugee resettlement program, several national security and terrorism experts told the Tribune-Review. It’s too lengthy a process. There are faster and easier ways to bring the fight to America, they contend.” (Cato, 2015)

However, a shooting at the Pittsburgh Tree of Life Synagogue brought terrorism to the city. One article explains: “The gunman posted online rants against Jews, police said, with a particular focus on the refugee resettlement activities of HIAS [a Jewish

resettlement agency]” (Smith, 2018). The reaction to this event again spoke to strong support of refugee populations, as the synagogue’s rabbi and the larger Jewish community’s resolve to continue resettlement efforts was reported in several articles: “Rabbi Berkun sees it as a ‘badge of honor’ that Tree of Life was sharing space with a congregation with that strong commitment to HIAS and refugees” (Smith, 2018).

Many articles also detail the mayor’s support of refugee resettlement efforts. Most recently, the mayor showed support to the refugee community as a Syrian refugee was arrested on terrorism charges. According to one article, he commented, “‘Pittsburgh has historically been a home for refugees and immigrants and will continue to be one’” (Murray, 2019). This statement seems to describe not only the mayor’s opinion, but the opinion of many in the Pittsburgh region. Despite being the only region in this study to face issues of terrorism, this analysis showed high levels of support in news media.

**Allentown/Scranton and Philadelphia.** The regions of Allentown/Scranton and Philadelphia also showed high levels of support. This follows statewide trends of high and consistent support through Trump’s time as president. These two regions also saw the smallest amount of data, with 14 pertinent articles found for Allentown and Scranton and 20 found for Philadelphia. No strong conclusions were drawn for these two regions, other than the trends found to exist statewide. 11 of 14 articles from Allentown and Scranton and 16 of 20 from Philadelphia mention supportive events and activities, such as World Refugee Day celebrations, partnerships to share cultural foods, and support from the religious community. In general, these two regions largely mirror statewide patterns.

## CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

### CONCLUSIONS

This study seeks to answer the questions: How has refugee resettlement in the state of Pennsylvania changed in the wake of new Trump-era policies? Specifically, how have refugee resettlement agencies and the larger community responded to policy changes?

Overall, results revealed several ways in which refugee resettlement has changed in the state of Pennsylvania in the wake of new restrictionist policies. First, resettlement systems have been damaged due to layoffs, closures, and other issues within resettlement agencies which stem from a lack of refugee arrivals. This finding was evident from both the lack of data gathered in the survey and trends in the few survey responses. Similar trends emerged in the content analysis. In addition, refugees who do arrive face family separation from travel bans and restrictionist measures, as evidenced in the content analysis and low arrival numbers. Finally, refugee resettlement is no longer supporting communities which rely on refugees to replace population losses. This trend was especially apparent in the regional content analysis for the city of Erie, Pennsylvania.

Content analysis revealed that communities generally responded to these changes in two ways. First, they continued strong support of refugee populations and resettlement efforts. This happened in all five regions analyzed, despite losing their steady stream of refugees, facing concerns over terrorism and security, and, in some communities, holding other politically conservative views. Community members in all five regions not only spoke in support of refugees themselves but also spoke out about negative effects of policy, sharing opinions that the government should do more to support its current and

incoming community members. Refugee resettlement agencies also continued their support of refugees and shared their opinions in news media. However, another response took place unwillingly within communities. Refugee resettlement agencies closed their doors, cut programming, and laid off employees in response to policy changes.

In this way, resettlement agencies and their employees have been one of the greatest casualties of new restrictionist policies. This is especially troubling because the national refugee cap is reset by each administration. When the cap is ultimately increased again, resettlement agencies will face the challenge of rebuilding their organizations to accommodate the influx.

In many ways, findings mirror current literature surrounding refugees. In local news media, communities recognized the burden of receiving refugees, including initial costs and security concerns. At the same time, they recognized a greater number of benefits, such as increased cultural diversity, economic benefit, family reunifications for refugees, and a general humanitarian benefit.

Communities were also expected to be harmed by the loss of refugees, as the literature concludes that refugees provide a general benefit to the communities in which they reside. This was found to be true in Pennsylvania communities, which suffered population loss (and therefore increased economic hardship), as well as the closure of vital resettlement organizations. This study has contributed findings about the challenges communities have faced in the wake of Trump-era policies which did not previously exist in the literature. Results relating to resettlement agencies are of particular interest, as very few studies have addressed these organizations in particular.

From a theoretical standpoint, these results support assertions made by Elite Theory. Findings not only show that communities are harmed by the loss of refugee populations, but many community members actively support resettlement efforts as well. This shows that current federal restrictionist policies exist in opposition to Pennsylvania communities' wants and needs. Elite Theory would argue that the reason these policies do not benefit Pennsylvania communities is because they instead benefit a class of power elites. According to the theory, these power elites hold power in the realms of government, military, and business and seek to maintain this power. In this case, the disempowerment of immigrant and refugee populations serves to keep power in the hands of these elite, which include President Trump. In this way, Elite Theory can be used to explain the discrepancy between federal policies and community needs.

On the other hand, findings did not reflect arguments made by Social Identity Theory. Social Identity Theory would expect local communities to see refugees as an "outgroup" rather than rally around them. While this theory may provide an explanation for increasing political polarization and the rhetoric of fear surrounding refugees nationwide, it cannot explain Pennsylvania communities' overwhelming support of refugee populations. In the context of this study, Elite Theory provides a better explanation for results than Social Identity Theory. Overall, this study finds that current restrictionist policies are harming Pennsylvania communities in a number of ways, and policies are not currently reflecting the wants and needs of these communities.



## LIMITATIONS

This study is limited in that it only explores one element of community expression: news coverage. While this provides valuable insight into communities, it may be influenced by the opinions of reporters or the values of news agencies, and some perspectives could be missing. In addition, the results of this study can only be generalized to the state of Pennsylvania. While findings may be pertinent to other regions, no generalizations can be made without further analysis.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Policies enacted by the federal government should adapt to reflect the needs of communities across the U.S., regardless of current rhetoric or political affiliation. Specifically, the president's administration should reconsider policies which are harmful to U.S. communities and cost American jobs. However, this solution is unlikely, given the current administration's anti-immigrant stance.

Instead, a uniform set of policies should be created and enacted for refugee resettlement. By providing a standardized set of expectations, refugee caps and other resettlement policies will not change drastically between administrations. The current system of allowing each administration to set the refugee cap does not allow for consistency within resettlement organizations, which expand and contract by the year. Many organizations have closed or are operating at low capacity in the wake of Trump-era policies. During this historically low refugee cap, the U.S. has lost resettlement organizations which will be necessary when the cap is increased by a future administration. In order to allow agencies to stabilize and provide job security to their

employees, standardized policies which cannot be drastically changed by the current administration must be enacted.

One such bill has already been introduced to Congress. The Guaranteed Refugee Admission Ceiling Enhancement Act, or GRACE Act, proposes an annual minimum number of refugees admissions at 95,000 (H.R. 2146, 2019). The minimum of 95,000 specifically is less important for resettlement agencies' stability than setting a minimum number of arrivals in general. Legislation like the GRACE Act lessens fluctuation between administrations and can help protect resettlement organizations from layoffs, cutbacks, and closures.

Future research in this subject area should continue to monitor the effects of national resettlement policy changes on local communities. This research could easily be replicated in various state contexts. In addition, a country-wide analysis of policy effects can provide further information on the subject. Future research should also seek to expand the body of literature available on refugee resettlement agencies.

In this especially tumultuous time for refugee resettlement, it is important to understand the effects of national policy on our local communities. While communities may passionately support refugee resettlement efforts, federal policy does not always follow. However, in a time of fear-based rhetoric and security concerns, in a politically conservative state, community members in Pennsylvania have continued to find ways to support refugees and voice their opinions when their nation's policies do not meet their community's needs.

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## APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### The Pennsylvania Survey of Refugee Resettlement

Thank you for filling out the Pennsylvania Survey of Refugee Resettlement. The purpose of this survey is to understand the impact of the national reduction in refugee cap numbers on Pennsylvania's resettlement agencies. Your feedback is greatly appreciated!

This survey is a part of a Lehigh University master's thesis in sociology and should be filled out once by each organization. The employee completing the survey will receive a \$25 Amazon gift card as a thank you for their feedback, which can be used personally or for organizational expenses.

If you have any questions regarding this survey or the larger research project, feel free to contact Katie Barr at [removed]. If you would like to receive the results of this research (expected August 2019), please indicate this preference at the end of the survey.

Thank you for your time.

- 
- 1) Organization name:
  - 2) In which city is your organization located?
  - 3) In which county(ies) is your organization located?
  - 4) What year was your organization founded?

- 
- 5) How many employees did your organization have in each of the following fiscal years?

2016 \_\_\_\_\_

2017 \_\_\_\_\_

2018 \_\_\_\_\_

6) Please indicate how many employees worked full-time each fiscal year.

2016 \_\_\_\_\_

2017 \_\_\_\_\_

2018 \_\_\_\_\_

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7) How many refugees were resettled through your organization in each of the following fiscal years?

2016 \_\_\_\_\_

2017 \_\_\_\_\_

2018 \_\_\_\_\_

8) How many refugees arrived with a family or friend already residing locally in each fiscal year?

2016 \_\_\_\_\_

2017 \_\_\_\_\_

2018 \_\_\_\_\_

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9) What was the organization's annual operating budget in each of the following fiscal years?

2016 \_\_\_\_\_

2017 \_\_\_\_\_

2018 \_\_\_\_\_

10) How much money in grant funding did your organization receive in each of the following fiscal years?

2016 \_\_\_\_\_

2017 \_\_\_\_\_

2018 \_\_\_\_\_

11) Approximately how many essential partners, or public-private partnerships, did your organization have in each of the following fiscal years?

2016 \_\_\_\_\_

2017 \_\_\_\_\_

2018 \_\_\_\_\_

---

12) In each of the following fiscal years, how many events did your organization host which were open to the public?

2016 \_\_\_\_\_

2017 \_\_\_\_\_

2018 \_\_\_\_\_

13) Approximately how many community members attended events hosted by your organization in each fiscal year? If this information is not recorded by your organization, please skip this question.

2016 \_\_\_\_\_

2017 \_\_\_\_\_

2018 \_\_\_\_\_

14) How many volunteers did you have in each fiscal year?

2016 \_\_\_\_\_

2017 \_\_\_\_\_

2018 \_\_\_\_\_

15) Please describe any support you currently receive from local legislators and if these relationships have changed since 2016.

---

16) Do you have any employees who have in the past or currently served on local boards, committees, or councils?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure.

17) Has this level of involvement among employees changed since FY 2016? If so, how?

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18) Which programs, initiatives, and services does your office currently offer to support refugees or immigrants who are already resettled locally?

19) Were these populations served the same way in 2016? If not, what were the differences?

20) Is there anything that has been of particular impact that has not been asked in this survey?

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21) Would you like the final product of this research study to be shared with your organization (expected August 2019)?

- Yes, send via **email** to:
- Yes, send via **mail** to:
- No, I would not like to see the results of this study.

22) Please provide the name and address where you would like the \$25 Amazon gift card to be shipped. After it has shipped, you will receive an email asking you to confirm that you have received the gift card. Thank you for completing the Pennsylvania Survey of Refugee Resettlement!

## APPENDIX B: CODEBOOK

### Major Themes and Subcategories

- Support of Refugees (Light Yellow)
  - G = General Support/Advocacy
  - P = Programs
  - A = Art, Culture, or Food
  - G = Grants
  - C = Charity, Fundraising, or Donations
  - S = Refugee Stories
  - PA = Local Partnerships
- Trump Policy: Negative Effects/Disapproval (Dark Yellow)
- Trump Policy: Positive Effects/Support (Orange)
- Mixed Stances/Neutral Stance (Dark Pink)
- Refugee Fear (Light Purple)
  - T = Terrorism
  - S = Screening/Vetting/Security
  - U = Unwelcomeness
  - A = Anxiety of Refugees
- Health (Dark Purple)
  - H = General Health
  - M = Mental Health
- Education (Blue)

- City Dynamics (Aqua)
  - E = Economy
  - M = City demographics and/or size
- Miscellaneous (Light Pink)
  - J = Jobs
  - H = Housing
  - U = United Nations
  - T = Technology
  - L = Legal
  - C = Canada

## Main Actors

- Religion (Light Yellow)
  - R = Religious Group/Church
  - B = Religious Official
  - J = Jewish Community
- Schools (Dark Yellow)
  - H = Higher Education
  - S = Students
  - SD = School District
- Refugee Support Organizations (Orange)
  - R = Resettlement Agency
  - N = Non-Profit Organization



- Government-Related (Dark Pink)
  - P= Politician
  - G = Government
  - PP = Political Party
- Refugee (Light Purple)
- Citizen (Dark Purple)
- Community (Blue)

## VITA

Katelyn Barr received her B.A. in Global Studies and German from Lehigh University in 2018. In 2019, she completed her Master of Arts in Sociology from the same institution, where she studied interactions between refugees and their host communities. Katelyn is hoping to continue her work with refugee and immigrant communities in the United States.